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## November 2003 – Alaska's Injury Prevention Newsletter

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### Alaska News and Resources

1. 511.Alaska.gov - Travel in the Know
2. Circle of Safety
3. Frostbite & Hypothermia Prevention

### National News and Resources

4. Giving Winter Walks the Slip
5. Keep Kids Safe While Sledding.
6. Holiday Safety Tips.

### Miscellaneous

7. Be Aware When Toy Shopping.
8. New Information From the Fire Safety Council.
9. Good Advice For Driving Alone.

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1. <http://511.alaska.gov/default.asp> – **Travel in the Know:** The Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities' new website and toll free hotline provides information on weather-related road conditions, traffic incidents, highway construction and maintenance, highway closures, natural disasters affecting highway travel (such as avalanches), and route-specific road conditions. Check out the interactive map and the Urgent Reports at the above website, or call 511.
2. **Circle of Safety:** The FAA Alaska's Circle of Safety Program is a consumer education program resulting from the continuing need to prevent and reduce accidents. Their public service announcements are aired on radio stations across the state. Check out their website at [www.alaska.faa.gov](http://www.alaska.faa.gov) for the Aviation Coordinator Handbook, the Traveler Training Handbook, and the Circle of Safety Consumer Safety Education Brochure.
3. **Frostbite and Hypothermia Prevention:** When you are out enjoying our winter weather, don't forget the following safety precautions:
  - Dress in layers – the outer layer should be wind-proof and water resistant, the layer closest to your body should be made of a material (for example, polypropylene) that moves moisture away from your skin.
  - Wear a hat that covers your ears.
  - Wear warm, water-proof boots.
  - Don't forget your gloves!
4. **Giving Winter Walks the Slip:** Taking short, shuffling steps across slippery areas is a good way to protect yourself against a fall during the winter months. Be sure your footwear has rubber or neoprene soles to help provide traction on snow and ice. Stay on designated walkways – don't take shortcuts over snow piles. And be careful getting in and out of your car – use the door for support and make sure both feet are firmly on the ground before standing up. To get more winter walking safety advice, go to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>
5. **Keep Kids Safe While Sledding:** Most sledding injuries occur when children fall off their sleds, collide with stationary objects (trees, fences, cars), or run into other sleds or people. Be sure your kids are sledding in a safe area, one that is free of trees or other obstacles. Watch that there is plenty of space at the bottom of the hill and an area on the

side for kids to walk up without hitting the descending sledders. Have a helmet for each child sledding. Don't let the kids sled without adult supervision – try it yourself!

6. **Holiday Safety Tips:** The American Academy of Pediatrics has put together a nice holiday safety checklist for you: [www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/dectips.htm](http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/dectips.htm)
7. **Be Aware When Toy Shopping:** The annual “Trouble in Toyland” report was released on November 25, 2003 by the Public Interest Research Group (PIRG). It shows that many manufacturers and retailers continue to sell toys that have small parts but are not labeled with the choke hazard warning as required by law. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) also issued a reminder for shoppers to be aware of recalled toys that may still be available in stores, resale shops, garage sales, and on the web. You can access the PIRG report here: <http://www.uspirg.org/> and the Toy Recall list is available at [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov).
8. **New Information From the Fire Safety Council:** [www.firesafety.gov](http://www.firesafety.gov) has the “Protecting Your Family From Fire” brochure available for downloading. The US Fire Administration reminds us: “Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage.” Be sure to visit their links on celebrating the holidays safely: <http://www.firesafety.gov/directory/public/seasonal.shtml>
9. **Good Advice For Driving Alone:**
  - Drive with your doors locked and windows rolled up.
  - Always have at least a half tank of gas in the car.
  - Never park next to a van with no windows. Park in areas that will be lighted when you return to your car.
  - If you're involved in a fender-bender at night or in an isolated area, signal the other driver to follow you and drive to the nearest open business or police station.
  - Don't leave your house keys with your car keys when your car is being serviced.
  - If you have car trouble, raise your hood, turn on your flashers, and stay inside your vehicle with the doors locked.

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### Fun Fact



If you are driving during a full moon, you are more likely to get into a traffic crash, according to the Churchill Insurance Group, a British Insurance Company. Their research shows that, on average, there are 14% more collisions during full moon periods and that all types of crashes increase. [www.churchill.co.uk](http://www.churchill.co.uk) (December 8<sup>th</sup> is the next full moon!)

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This message has been compiled by the Section of Community Health and EMS (CHEMS), Alaska Division of Public Health and sent to subscribers of the AK-Prev and AHELP list-serves. It has also been sent as a "bcc" to others in Alaska including Public Health Centers, SAFE KIDS coalitions, Native Health Organizations, and regional EMS Councils and Coordinators who may be interested and active in injury prevention and health promotion. The purpose is to share resources, breaking news, training opportunities, product recalls, and opinions to help prevent injuries to Alaskans. Feedback and contributions are encouraged. Contributions can be directed to Mary Krom, [mary\\_krom@health.state.ak.us](mailto:mary_krom@health.state.ak.us)